

Maxed Out!

Thanks Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation



Margaret Ann Riecker
President of
The Herbert H. and Grace
A. Dow Foundation

Once again hundreds of individuals in Midland County have put the heat to The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation, and made them pay dearly....and The Foundation couldn't be happier.

In 2004, The Foundation once again offered to provide one million dollars of program

endowment support by giving three dollars for every one dollar WMFC could raise elsewhere by NOVEMBER of 2008. We are pleased to announce that we have received enough donations to qualify for the entire million-dollar match. When The Foundation pays on its final gift of \$122,379.81 in November of 2008 The Foundation will have donated a total of \$3,000,000 towards the Program Endowment Fund over the last 15 years (covering three five-year \$1,000,000 challenge grant periods). As of March 17, 2008, the Program Endowment Fund had a total value of approximately \$4,400,000.

"The size of the fund is not what matters to our families, it is how it is used that makes a difference for the community, said Greg Dorrien WMFC's Executive Director.

"Even while the fund has grown every single year, we have been able to use most of the earnings to help our families grow stronger. Because of this fund we have been able to transfer over \$2.1 million to operations and have helped the community in a variety of ways. Fifteen years ago we were unable to provide transportation services. Today, we provide much-needed transportation to the Preschool, the Extended Learning Center, the Summer Program, and to families participating in our counseling services. Instead of leading one topic at a Parent Education Night, we are able to offer four to six different topics of interest to our families. Even if a Midland County resident never set foot in WMFC, we are all better off for these efforts because almost all of these

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Once again.....it's time to introduce West Midland Family Center's new board members

At the meeting on March 17, 2008 the Board of Directors voted to instate Melanie Lefevre and Lynsey Crego as members of the WMFC Board of Directors. These fine candidates replace Rod Dishaw and Ashley Barriger who have each played an invaluable role over their terms. Rod and Ashley, your contributions are greatly appreciated!



Lynsey Crego comes to us from the Bullock Creek School District where she has worked since 2000, originally teaching at the Middle School. Currently she is working at Floyd Elementary School where she teaches fourth grade: a factor contributing to her decision to join the WMFC Board. Lynsey stated that she has seen first-hand the positive impact WMFC makes in the lives of her students and their families. Lynsey has been married for almost 5 years to her husband Jack. She has a stepdaughter Skylar, a little boy Jackson, and new baby

girl arriving in April. Lynsey enjoys gardening, camping, sewing and skiing. She grew up in Mt. Pleasant and moved to Midland to do her student teaching.



Melanie Lefevre

Melanie Lefevre is employed by Cline, Close, Dyer PLC where she represents business owners and non-profits in various commercial litigation matters. She currently does legal work as guardian ad litem for abuse and neglect wards and is an attorney for juvenile delinquents. Melanie is married, has four cats and was raised in Jackson, Michigan. She loves to read and watch old movies. WMFC always seeks to find new ways to provide support systems to families in the community, which is what drew Melanie to WMFC. She believes that without such places, families would not have a central place to find support in their daily lives whether for simple services like childcare or for more complicated issues like conflicts in parent-child relationships.

Renee Young and Greg Bergtold Receive The Safe and Sound Child Advocacy Center's Outstanding Achievement Award



Renee Young and Greg Bergtold

On February 28, 2008 Renee Young and Greg Bergtold received THE SAFE AND SOUND CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER'S OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD. This

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Charles Cochran's Great Adventure



Charles Cochran

hanging out at the Center.

For instance Charles recently took the trip of his lifetime. As Dow Chemical retiree and veteran of WWII, Charles joined approximately 90 other Dow retiree/WWII veterans on an "Honor Flight" sponsored by The Dow Chemical Company in tribute of their service to our country. Very early on November 7, 2007 Charles and the group of 90 boarded a plane at Tri-City airport. They flew to Washington D.C., upon landing they were greeted by illuminated fire trucks that showered the plane with water in homage. They made their first stop at the WWII Memorial followed by lunch and a program

of dignitaries including: Former Senator Bob Dole, Chairman of the National WWII Veteran's Memorial, House of Representative member Dave Camp, Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow. On that day they saw the Lincoln, Marine Corps, Korean and Vietnam Memorials. Accompanied by police escort they drove to Arlington Cemetery where they paid their respects, witnessed the changing of the guard and the wreath laying ceremony. Each man was assigned a "guardian," a Vietnam veteran whose role was to assure that the trip went smoothly for the WWII veterans. They returned to Tri-City airport that evening, received by a band and over 300 well wishers.

In 1943, at the age of 20, Dow Chemical Employee Charles Cochran entered the



Charles meets
Former Senator
Bob Dole

service, where he began his first trip of a lifetime! He was part of the 147th Battalion - 829th Amphibious Truck Company. During the two and a half years he spent abroad he served in North Africa, Italy, France, Germany, Austria and the Philippines. He participated in the D-Day invasion of Southern France and crossed the Rhine and Danube Rivers as American forces made their way across Germany. He is a decorated war hero who returned safely to his family, his hometown and his job at Dow. Shortly after returning home, Charles married Madeline Stockton and together they have three children. Charles' two brothers served terms concurrent with his own. They also came home safely.

When asked what he would tell other veterans about his "Honor Flight," Charles said, "You should make sure to go if given the chance. They will go out of their way to make it work for you."

Summer Program in the Works!

Looking Forward to WMFC's Summer Program

In January when most folks are recovering from the holidays the WMFC summer program staff members are looking ahead to summer. This year with new partners summer program planning moved ahead with many exciting new twists. With the intent of providing the most developmentally appropriate program possible, two distinctive camps have been created: School-aged and Early Childhood. Each of these programs brings with it components that are new this year. For instance, in collaboration with Bullock Creek Schools the School Aged camp will include:

- 80 hours of summer school instruction for 60, sixth to eighth grade students

- 48 hours of academic skill building for second through sixth grade students

Additionally participants will choose from two-week themed sessions including Artists's ALIVE! - Athletes Unleashed - Drama, Drama - Science Eyes - Outdoor Adventures. At the conclusion of each two-weeks the Outdoor Adventurers will spend one day at the Chippewa Nature Center

The new Early Childhood program called "Play with a Purpose" is for ages preschool, Kindergarten and first grade. These children will gather at Floyd Elementary School. The

planned program components are as follows:

- A significant emphasis on literacy that will include 30 minutes each day in Floyd Elementary's Diagnostic Reading Lab
 - Preschool and first grade integrated skill building daily
 - "Capable Kids" parent education program ½ day each week
 - Large and small motor skills development
 - Outdoor and Nature Activities including visits by the Chippewa Nature Center staff members,
 - Dramatic Play, Science Activities, Sport
- So much to do! Another summer destined to fly right by

Renee Young and Greg Bergtold Receive...

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honor is truly deserved by both and is one that WMFC takes personally as Renee and Greg are members of the West Midland Family. Renee serves as the WMFC Family Services Director and Greg is a former WMFC Board Member currently serving as Chairman of our Facilities Committee.

When THE SAFE AND SOUND CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER [at that time the Midland County Child Protection Council] began to assess the need for a forensic interview center for children in Midland County they turned to Board President Renee Young to lead the mission. Renee accepted the challenge and then spent countless volunteer hours and the next four years assuring completion of this project. From vision to implementation Renee pushed forward to bring this much needed resource to the children of Midland County. Along the way, she enlisted the help of many dedicated volunteers. Among

them was Greg Bergtold. When it became evident that help was needed to undertake the facility construction aspect of the project, former Probate Court Judge Donna Morris, recommended Greg as the perfect fit. Which was indeed the case. Greg generously volunteered his expertise and many hours of his time to assure that the unique needs of such a facility were addressed. He was an integral factor in guaranteeing the success of the project. A true ambience director, Greg became the liaison between the builder and Board committees to meet the unique needs of the precious children this facility was designed to serve.

Those of us at WMFC are most proud of Greg and Renee for the unselfish dedication they have shown to the children of our community. "Paying it Forward" at its best. Kudos to you both!!

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kids and families with whom we work are becoming productive, socially responsible, contributing citizens," concluded Dorrien.

"The Trustees of The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation are delighted to have been able to offer these challenge grants to help build the Program Endowment Fund and, more importantly, to help West Midland Family Center expand their donor base. The WMFC has earned a reputation as a provider of excellent programs and valuable services and we strongly encourage donors to continue their support of the Program Endowment Fund," stated Margaret Ann (Ranny) Riecker, President of The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation.

With love from the U.P.

By Greg Dorrien, Executive Director

The radio announcer had just finished a story on the rising price of tolls on the Mackinaw Bridge. I paid it no mind. I was thinking of the "Pay It Forward" article I needed to write for this issue of Family Focus. I thought I'd check our website www.wmfc.org to see if any anonymous community members might have posted a story that would give me inspiration. Being a double legacy child of the Upper Peninsula (the city boy from DeTour Village had married the country beauty queen from Goetzville), I eagerly clicked on the "With love from the U.P." story.

Now many of the "Pay It Forward" stories community members have posted on our website involve helping people they know are in a tough spot...and that is very commendable. If I didn't believe in that philosophy I couldn't work at the Center. But, "With love from the U. P." was about

that truly random act of kindness that takes no justification. "With love from the U.P." is about a young couple that many years ago pulled up to the tollbooth on the Mackinaw Bridge only to be told that the previous car had paid their toll. They were so touched that to this very day they always pay the toll of the car behind them. The first donor car had no idea if the second car needed any help. It didn't matter. The end result is that one simple act of charity has been repeated over and over again and probably picked up by additional grateful motorists.



Humpty practices reaching out to a stranger.

We teach the kids (and parents) here at WMFC that the only way to get good at anything is to practice. Getting good at giving is the same way. It might start by giving at church, then giving your time to the United Way, sometimes it is as simple as giving your full attention to someone who is talking to you or extending the hand of friendship to a stranger. Giving works in many ways and we all need the help. For me, the tolls on the Mackinaw Bridge just doubled, (and I couldn't be happier about it!)

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To the best of our knowledge, this listing is accurate as of publication. However, if you find that we have erroneously placed you on our list of anonymous donors ~ please contact us!

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Look for these Friendly Faces

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Interns Heather Bartlett, Darcy Lee

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Site Manager Tammy Jerome
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Each staff member is listed only once although many serve multiple roles at the Center.



WEST MIDLAND FAMILY CENTER

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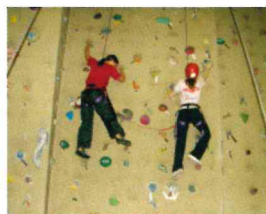
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Queen Bees - United Way Women's Initiative Grant

Wouldn't it be great if every teenage girl had a special role model to look up to and to learn from? The need for good role models is ever more important in today's violent society where



*Suzi and Bridgette
Race to the top*

teens are faced with increasingly difficult choices. With the generosity of The United Way Women's Initiative West Midland Family Center is working with seven local girls to strengthen their positive leadership skills in its QUEEN BEE's program. This program is a yearlong mentoring program for girls ages 12-16 who want to develop their social leadership styles in a healthy positive way.

The program has been underway since August of 2007 where we began recruitment and has developed into a wonderful learning experience for not only the girls but also the mentors. Each pair of mentors/mentees have spent time talking and participating in activities that the girls chose outside of WMFC as well as in our monthly educational workshops.

The girls and their mentors attend one workshop monthly where they practice positive social skills and development of their leadership styles. It



*Amber, Haleigh, Ariel, Sheleigh,
Mercedes and Dori - Girls and
mentors wait to climb.*

has been within these workshops that the girls have discovered their strengths and weakness, how to apply their characteristics to life and future endeavors as well as making new lasting friendships. The QUEEN BEE's program is more than half over and there has been positive growth in all the girls: great friendships have formed between girls and mentors. They demonstrate even



Amber reaches the top

more mutual respect towards one another and enjoy spending time together. Its been rewarding for mentors and WMFC staff to witness the positive assets of these young ladies on a regular basis.